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MR. MORRIS GRAY

President of the Museum

AT a special meeting of the Trustees of the Museum, held October 30, Mr. Morris Gray was unanimously elected President of the Museum. To the formal notification of his election Mr. Gray made the following response :

"I feel very much honored by this election and am very glad to accept the position. I think that I can assure the Trustees that at least I shall not fail in personal devotion to the welfare of the Museum.

"To my mind the Museum faces a serious situation. The death of Mr. Lane may well be characterized as an irreparable loss. It comes, too, at a time of grave financial conditions, entailing presumably a large shrinkage in contributions to purchase works of art and to meet running expenses certain to be much larger with the opening presently of the new galleries.

"Under all these circumstances, the Museum stands in exceptional need of the time and thought of the Trustees if it is to continue the wise development of its service to the public."

Mr. Gray was elected a Trustee on January 16, 1902. Since January 21, 1904, he has been a member of the Finance Committee of the Board, and since January 19, 1911, a member of the Committee on the Museum, which is charged with the general supervision and control of all matters connected with the Museum.

A Statuette of the Minoan Snake Goddess

Gift of Mrs. W. Scott Fitz

EXCAVATIONS carried on in the island of Crete during the last fifteen years have furnished the materials for an entirely new chapter in the history of the ancient world. We now know that throughout the third and second millennia before Christ Crete was the centre of a continuous and highly developed civilization, the existence of which had been barely suspected before. The course of its political history can only be guessed at from the ruins of its towns and palaces, from a few references in contemporary Egyptian records, and from vague traditions handed down to the Greeks of historic times. The Cretans were a sea-faring people, controlling the commerce of the Ægean; they lived in unfortified towns and were able for the most part to develop the arts of peace undisturbed. The climax of their civilization, to be dated about 1500 B.C., is best illustrated by the great palace at Knossos and the rich finds made in

it. From the name of its legendary king, Minos, the whole prehistoric age of Crete has been called "Minoan." Not long after 1500 B.C. Knossos was destroyed and the centre of power shifted to Mycenæ, Tiryns, and other strongholds on the Greek mainland, whose rulers, though in part at least of a different race, maintained a close connection with the older island civilization. The best of the works of art which have been found in the shaft graves at Mycenæ and on other "Mycenæan" sites are clearly the products of Minoan artists. Finally, as a result of repeated inroads from the North, culminating in the series of events known as the Dorian Invasion, this civilization was entirely destroyed. Faint echoes of its past splendor are preserved in the Homeric poems, and it has been suggested that the tale of the lost Atlantis, told to Solon by Egyptian priests, referred to Minoan Crete. Its ruins, however, did not sink beneath the sea, but were merely covered by a few feet of earth and thus preserved for the archæologist of the twentieth century. As a result we of the present day know far more about this prehistoric